



# LEAF

## Living on the Edge of Arden Forests

Issue XII, Summer 2023

## Everyone Back Into the Woods!

**What happens when thirteen hardworking “Ivy Leaguers” spend over 100 hours clearing 5,000 square feet of invasive plants in the Arden Woods off Cherry Lane?** On a picture-perfect evening in mid-May, Arden Forest Committee Co-Chair Beverly Clendening led a very special woodland tour organized by the Arden Club Gardeners Gild to find out.

**Members of the Gild had participated in the initial “Ivy Pull” that launched the year-long experiment funded in part by a grant from the Delaware Invasive Species Council (DISC).** Ardentown’s resident plant expert Elaine Schmerling joined Bev in pointing out native plants as the attendees made their way along Naamans Creek to the test site.

We all know that large swaths of the Arden Woods have been impacted by the introduction and subsequent spread of invasive species, including the highly visible English ivy and Vinca minor. Very few native species remain—predominately mature trees with sparse understory. The four-plot test was designed to demonstrate the regrowth of native plants in areas that have been cleared of invasive species and protected from deer browse. And, to compare the effectiveness of polypropylene fence (Plots A & B) to fishing line (Plot C) enclosures.

**“Since the initial test began, twenty-six native plants, shrubs and trees have been identified within the boundaries of the test area,”** observed Bev. “The regeneration of natives after clearing the invasives is nothing short of amazing—and certainly a reward for the efforts of all involved.”



## What Did We Learn?

**We are at our best when we collaborate.** Many thanks to the Arden Forest Committee, their counterparts in Ardentown and Ardencroft and the Gardeners Gild for their contributions to this initiative.

**The fenced Plots A & B fared better than the fishing line barrier Plot C.** When the fence was temporarily down in the fall, deer browsed the shrubs—especially the planted dogwood. Planted native species grew and established shrubs continued to thrive.

**The fenced area experienced new growth** including oak and sweet cherry saplings, mayapple, Eastern enchanted nightshade, jumpseed, longstyle sweet root and cutleaf toothwort.

**Though there was less regrowth than in the other two areas, in the less protected area** beech and oak saplings, spice bush, mayapple, moonshade and nightshade survived deer browsing.





## Trunk Injection

### It's Like An IV for Our Ash Trees

Unbeknownst to many, the iridescent emerald ash borer's (EAB) deadly presence is becoming more apparent as our ash trees throughout Delaware begin to decline. The first sign may be a seemingly innocent woodpecker pecking away in search of larvae. A more obvious sign is a thinning tree canopy—individual branches dying above the crown of the tree called dieback. Sparse foliage, vertical bark splits and small shoots (epicormics branching) are signs of damage which may take up to three years to show.

It is suspected that EAB was introduced from overseas in shipping materials such as packing crates. To date, it has killed tens of millions of ash trees throughout North America and is now considered the most destructive forest pest in our history.

In the Ardens, we started treating the ash borer in 2019, a year after it was first detected in neighboring Greenville. As it became apparent that ash trees throughout the community were cause for concern, Trustee and Arden Forest Committee Co-Chair Carol Larson became certified by the Delaware Department of Agriculture to administer the most effective treatment option, trunk injection. "You need to treat before signs of damage are obvious and the vascular system of the tree is compromised," observed Carol, who is shown at left administering the trunk injection treatment on an ash in the Arden Woods.

For the nearly 140 ash trees targeted throughout the Ardens, the cost per tree ranges from \$106 to \$265. Each tree will require treatment every two to three years. Compared to the cost of removals—\$1,500 for a smaller tree to \$3,000 for a large complex tree, it's a bargain. The Arden Civic and Forest Committee budgets pay for ash treatment on public lands and the right-of-way. The Arden Trust uses their portion of the bequest from Johanna Schroeder that was earmarked to help leaseholders preserve trees. Residents throughout the Ardens have been struggling with ash tree deaths on their leaseholds. If you suspect you have an ash tree requiring treatment, please email Carol at [forest@arden.delaware.gov](mailto:forest@arden.delaware.gov).

## Arden Forest Committee

### Current elected members:

Beverly Clendening & Carol Larson,  
Co-Chairs

Jess Colgan-Snyder, Eric Reed, Lisa Wolfe

Buzz Ware Village Center

2119 The Highway, Wilmington, DE 19810

**Join us at the Arden Fair!** What's everyone's favorite way to wrap-up their summer vacation season? The Arden Fair, of course! Want to learn more about how you can become a Certified Wildlife Habitat? How about joining us and our partners, the Delaware Invasive Species Council (DISC), to find out how you can help protect and preserve Arden's woodlands? We'll have lots of information—and a raffle or two—so please stop by our table at 1900 Sherwood Road on September 2.



## In the Woods with Stevie & Paul Nolan

Paul Nolan recalled that it seemed like a “message” when members of the Arden Forest Committee appeared in the woods behind their home to remove invasives one morning. Armed with chainsaws and

loppers, the members attacked a field of *Euonymus alatus*, a.k.a. burning bush, behind the Nolan’s newly-acquired Orchard Road home. So, what did Paul do when he heard all the commotion? What else? He and his wife, Stevie, joined in!

Through a chance encounter with Forest Committee Co-Chair Carol Larson at the Annual ACRA Pancake Breakfast, Stevie Nolan learned the beautiful flaming red bush in her woods was not a native—and a threat to the forest’s ecosystem. That’s all it took to spark the pair’s activism and involvement of working in the woods.

“It seems that I have spent my whole life in, near or wanting to be in the woods,” Paul observed. “I grew up surrounded by woods with no houses in sight. The woods were my playground for constructing forts, making paths, creating primitive tree huts and escaping from chores and homework. Each of my adult residences were near large wooded areas in which I roamed and loved.”

“I am so incredibly happy to be in Arden,” noted Stevie. “I love being in the woods—the beauty, peace, intricacies, wildness, colors, smells, juxtaposition of shapes all about. I also love getting dirty and having any part of my body on or near the earth.”

Nine months later and finally settled into their new home, how do the Nolans describe their time as “woods workers”?

“I feel perfectly comfortable with being an ‘invasive cop’ and being part of a group of people who are so dedicated. I can’t imagine a better committee to be on!” Paul observed. “It’s been a good introduction to the cooperative spirit of Arden. I’m learning a lot about the woods!”

“It brings together our ‘Past, Present and Future’—respect for the land and the generations who lived here before you. We’re engaged in the moment—in the present through our work. We are committed and are taking responsibility of the stewardship of the land for those who will follow,” she concluded. “We are grounded in the present. It’s fun!”

“Rooted in the ground. Not just little roots; dealing with the roots of the past and present,” Paul added. Stevie nodded in agreement.



## A Good Deed? A Good Weed!

Every Earth Day, we all provide a little extra “love” to the Ardens’ forests and streams with our annual clean-up. **Just for participating this year, everyone received a raffle ticket for four hours of weeding.** Taking part in the April 22 event with his wife, step-grandson and granddaughter, John Demsey won the prize. But, when asked about scheduling time to clear his property, **John offered to donate his family’s winning weeding time to someone who couldn’t weed his or her own garden anymore.**

About the same time, Marianne Cinaglia reached out for help with yardwork. **For those who may be unaware, Marianne is an organizer of the Christina River Watershed Cleanup and has led the Naamans Creek area effort for many years.** Serendipity? Fate? We think so. **Many thanks to John and his family for their generosity.** And, to Paul Nolan, Carol Larson, Eric Reed and Bev Clendening who made Marianne’s weeding work not seem like work at all!

**Stay tuned for more on the Nolans other passion—making music! Watch for when Stevie and the Bluescasters will be playing in Arden again.**



## From the Arden Club Gardeners Gild

The Arden Club Gardeners Gild may be on summer hiatus, but they are certainly still busy gardening—and **busy planning for the upcoming fall planting season!**

Thinking of adding color to your winter garden, how about a few witch hazels? Looking for more berries for your feathered friends? You may want to add an oak leaf viburnum or elderberry. **The Gild is in the process of putting together the plant list for their fall shrub and tree sale.** If you have any requests, please let Hajni Halasz know at [787serendipity@gmail.com](mailto:787serendipity@gmail.com). They'll try to accommodate your requests depending on plant availability from the wholesale nursery.

**The Gardeners Gild Plant Booth is seeking contributions of potted plants, shrubs, house plants and herbs to be sold during their annual fundraiser at the Arden Fair.**

And if you don't have plants, they'll take your donations of plant pots, too! Per their note in the Arden Club Calendar, be advised that it's best to pot things up now, so that they are healthy and well-established by Fair day. Please keep this in mind when you are tending to your garden in the coming weeks!

## Get Involved! Join Us for Woods Work!

Each Tuesday, weather permitting, the Arden Forest Committee and our volunteers meet at 10 a.m. for two hours of woods work. Projects range from tackling one of our many non-native invasive plants to clearing newly-fallen tree branches to prevent the clogging of Naamans Creek. Clippers, shovels and loppers may be required, or furnished for use on request. With ongoing efforts in both the Arden Woods and Sherwood Forest, some initiatives may involve responding to damage caused by storm water runoff—like a dislodged footbridge or suddenly soggy trail. In addition to helping maintain our woodlands, you'll learn what to plant and what to pull and much more! **To join in, Ardenites can email us at [forest@arden.delaware.gov](mailto:forest@arden.delaware.gov).** For forest preservation efforts in Ardentown, we'll happily connect you with Elaine Schmerling or in Ardencroft, we'll reach out to Lisa Surbrook, Scott Bowers and Ariel Gruswitz of the newly-formed Ardencroft Forest Stewardship Special Committee on your behalf. Join in! It's fun work!



## Thank You for Joining Us for Earth Day!

We all know that every day is Earth Day in the Ardens. This year, we

have a very special "thank you" coming your way! Want to see just how much fun we had?



Check out the **NEW ARDEN ALBUMS** on the Forests of the Ardens Facebook page!

## Hoo – Hoo – Hoo – Who's in the Woods?

You are! Please plan to join the Arden Forest Committee for a special scary "Hunter's Moon Woods Walk" on Friday, October 28. Spooky storytelling? A roaring Indian Circle bonfire & S'mores? Add a "Boo" to your "Hoo" this Halloween!



LEAF, Living on the Edge of Arden Forests, is brought to you by the Arden Forest Committee on behalf of the Forests of the Ardens Collective. For additional information and copies of this newsletter, please visit [arden.delaware.gov/committees/forest-committee](http://arden.delaware.gov/committees/forest-committee) or the [Forests of the Ardens Facebook](#) page. To contact us, email [forest@arden.delaware.gov](mailto:forest@arden.delaware.gov).